

NIFA in the News – Week of July 23, 2012

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### In the News

**Winter Honey Bee Losses Drop (Western Farm Press, 7/24)** Total losses of managed honey bee colonies from all causes dropped to 21.9 percent nationwide for the 2011/2012 winter, a decline of some 8 percentage points or 27 percent from the approximately 30 percent average loss beekeepers have experienced in recent winters, according to the latest annual survey conducted by the Bee Informed Partnership, the Apiary Inspectors of America and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). [Link](#)

**Video Series Helps Those Helping Wounded, Ill Military Members (Katy News, Texas, 7/24)** The Military Program of the Texas AgriLife Extension Service, part of the Texas A&M University System, has developed a series of informational online videos to assist individuals providing care for wounded, ill or injured service members, said program officials. "The series includes 11 topical online videos designed to alleviate caregiver stress and provide a basic understanding of injuries that may be sustained by service members in combat," said Donna Martin, AgriLife Extension's Texas Military Program director. [Link](#)

**Feds Award U. of Hawaii \$6M for Biofuels Research (NewsOK, Oklahoma, 7/25)** The federal government is giving the University of Hawaii \$6 million for biofuels research. The U.S. Departments of Agriculture and Energy announced the award Wednesday, saying the Hawaii investment will drive more efficient biofuels production and feedstock improvements. The project involves grass production in Hawaii so that harvest and processing can be compatible with biochemical conversion to jet fuel and diesel. [Link](#)

**Biofuel Project Receives \$6 Million Grant (UHawaii News, 7/25)** The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources and its project partners were awarded a four-year \$6 million grant by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture to increase Hawai'i's energy security by creating locally produced renewable energy. [Link](#)

**UW-Madison Receives \$7M Grant for Manure Conversion Projects (Wisconsin State Journal, 7/25)** UW-Madison has received a \$7 million federal grant that will

help a large dairy farm near Green Bay convert cow manure into ethanol, fertilizer and mulch. "The idea is to use virtually everything," said John Markley, a biochemistry professor and a principal investigator for the project, which is a joint effort between the university, Madison-based biotech company Soil Net and Maple Leaf dairy farm near Green Bay. [Link](#)

**Director of the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture Visits Fort Valley State University (WMGT Macon, Georgia, 7/26)** The Director of the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture was in Fort Valley today. Dr. Sonny Ramaswamy was the guest speaker at Fort Valley State University. Dr. Ramaswamy's speech was on education, research, and farming. Ramaswamy said one of the biggest issues that the world faces today is an increasing population. Last October, there were 7 billion people on earth. And, in ten years, Ramaswamy said there could be 8 billion people. Ramaswamy believes efficient farming methods will be key to success in the U.S. [Link](#)

**Pursuing Abundance: USDA, DOE Invest \$41M to Drive Biofuels Feedstock Yields, Diversification**

**(Biofuels Digest, 7/26)** In Washington, new weekly statistics that will be released by the US Drought Monitor this and next week are expected to show that recent rains are beginning to ease drought conditions in the Midwest. Accordingly, corn futures have begun to back off substantially from their record highs last week (reaching \$8.34, but now down to \$7.88 for the July contract and \$6.64 for the September contract on CBOT. [Link](#)

**USDA Official Touts Importance of Agriculture During Talk at FVSU (Georgia Telegraph, 7/26)** With the world population expected to grow by a billion people over the next 10 years, improving farm production is essential, said a top U.S. Department of Agriculture official. His department is the USDA's link to land grant colleges and provides funds for agricultural research. [Link](#)

**USDA, DOE Grants to Support Biobased Products (WTVA Tupelo/Columbus, 7/26)** The United States Department of Agriculture and the U. S. Department of Energy will provide funding to Cooper Tire to help with the development of natural rubber used to manufacture tires. The USDA will provide \$6.85 million to the company to improve the quality of guayule rubber. Guayule is a perennial hardwood natural-rubber producing shrub grown in the southwestern United States. [Link](#)

**UGA Gets \$2 Million in Federal Money for Projects (13WMAZ Athens, Georgia, 7/26)** The University of Georgia has been awarded \$2 million in federal money for projects aiming to drive more efficient biofuels production and feedstock improvements. The U.S. departments of Agriculture and Energy on Wednesday announced \$10 million for eight research projects. UGA was awarded \$500,000 to use a genetic analysis of biomass to identify the plant architecture that is important for optimized biomass production in a range of environments. A second award of \$1.5 million will be used for a project to determine how protein levels affect biomass development and water use in woody plants. [Link](#)

**USDA, DOE Invest \$41 Million in 13 Biofuels, Biomass Projects (Biomass Magazine, 7/26)** The USDA and the U.S. DOE announced they are putting \$41 million toward 13 projects focused on developing sustainable biomass feedstock

sources and increasing the availability of renewable fuels and bio-based products. Five of the projects are being funded through the joint Biomass Research and Development Initiative. They are cost-shared projects, and focus on replacing gasoline and diesel. [Link](#)

**USDA, DOE Announce New Investments in Biofuels (CleanTechnica, 7/27)** Hot off the heels of the solar energy zone development proposal, the US government continues to make hits with renewable energy this week. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Department of Energy (DOE) have announced an investment of \$41 million to drive innovation and efficiency in feedstock improvement and biofuels production. The investment will be geared towards 13 projects. [Link](#)

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